

June 30, 2005

Dear Neighbors,

Thank you for your attendance, participation and input at the Watson Park community meeting last night. I would like to provide you with an update from last night's meeting on the soil contaminants at Watson Park. Please know that the health and safety of the people who use Watson Park is my highest priority. I understand that this park is a very important asset to the neighborhood and is used and loved by many.

The community gardens, Watson Soccer field #1, and the Watson play lots have been closed to protect park users from any potential contamination as a result of testing in these areas that indicated the presence of contaminants known to be harmful to human health, specifically lead, arsenic and PCBs.

Further testing and analysis is required to understand the extent of any threat to human health, if any. In the mean time, to be cautious, we have closed these areas and will keep them closed until we receive comprehensive test results and can further determine the environmental state they are in.

At last night's meeting several important questions and concerns were raised including:

- ***Keeping the community fully and promptly informed is essential by providing complete information via the city's park web site. <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/prns>***
- ***There is a great deal of local knowledge of the dump that should be used in the analysis.***
- ***Adjacent and nearby residents are concerned about the possibility of contamination on their own homes.***
- ***Some residents & park users are concerned about their personal exposure to lead, arsenic and PCB.***
- ***Having the park closed is difficult in a community with so little park space. Every effort should be made to ensure that the environmental analysis of the park and the subsequent clean up are done quickly so the park can reopen.***
- ***Community gardeners have invested significant time and money in their garden plots and would like to be adequately reimbursed for their expenses this season.***

Some of the questions and concerns you have raised above and additional questions from the meeting last night are answered within the Watson community notes attached. Other questions are currently unanswered, however, staff will be taking immediate steps to respond to all concerns that you and your neighbors have raised. This includes continuing with a complete analysis of the contaminants in the park and extent of the dumpsite. As part of the effort to keep the community involved staff will be working with the neighborhood to form a Watson Park Advisory Committee composed of representatives from key stakeholder groups. Residents will be notified of upcoming meetings and updates regarding all future findings and results surrounding Watson Park.

If you have additional questions, please contact Jonathan Noble from my office at (408) 277-5231 (*new number beginning July 18th: (408) 535-4903*) or Ed Bautista from Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services at (408) 277-2466 (*new number beginning July 11th: (408)535-3570*).

Sincerely,

Cindy Chavez, Vice Mayor
City of San José